

REMARKS

Claims 1-29 are pending. In the Final Office Action of November 30, 2009, claims 1-2, 5-9 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 and claims 3, 10-13, 15-16, 18-22, 25-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103. Claims 4, 14, 17 and 23 are objected to, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this response, Applicants have amended claims 1, 12-14 and 23, without prejudice, in order to expedite the allowance of the present application. Applicants reserve the right to file one or more continuation or divisional applications based on other combinations of features in the present application.

Allowable Subject Matter and Claim Objections

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 4, 14, 17 and 23 contain allowable subject matter.

Claim 4 has been canceled, and its corresponding features incorporated into the amended claim 1, which is now allowable. Claim 14 has been amended by rewriting in independent form, and incorporating all of the limitations of claim 1 (prior to the current amendment, i.e., without the features of claim 4) and intervening claims 11 and 13. Claim 23 has been rewritten in independent form by incorporating all limitations of claim 1 (again, without the features of claim 4) and claim 22.

Since claims 14, 17 and 23 are all allowable in its present form, Applicants respectfully request that their objection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections

A. 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claims 1-2, 5-9 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Kojima et al., US Patent 6,980,236 (hereinafter, "Kojima").

Independent claim 1 has been amended, without prejudice, by incorporating the features from claim 4, which, as indicated in the Office Action, would be allowable.

Since claims 2, 5-9 and 24 depend from claim 1 and recite additional features, these claims are also patentable over Kojima.

C. 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 3, 10-13, 15-16, 18-22 and 25-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Kojima in combination with one or more references and/or Official Notices, as summarized below:

Claim 3: rejected over Kojima in view of Kusaka et al. (US 2003/0012559).

Claim 10: rejected over Kojima in view of Mooney et al (US 6,351,813, "Mooney").

Claim 11: rejected over Kojima in view of Huang et al. (US 6,247,052, "Huang").

Claim 12: rejected over Kojima in view of Huang and Mooney.

Claim 13: rejected over Kojima in view of Huang and Umeda (US 2001/0017977, "Umeda").

Claim 15: rejected over Kojima in view of Lipton et al (US 4,523,226, "Lipton").

Claim 16: rejected over Kojima in view of Nishimoto et al. (JP 10-240904, "Nishimoto").

Claims 18, 21-22 and 27-29: rejected over Kojima and Official Notices.

Claim 19: rejected over Kojima in view of Roffman (US 6,375,568, "Roffman").

Claim 20: rejected over Kojima in view of Goldstein (US 5,410,326, "Goldstein").

Claims 25-26: rejected over Kojima in view of Umeda.

Claims 12-13 have been amended to depend from claim 1.

Since claims 3, 10-13, 15-16, 18-22, and 25-29 depend, either directly or indirectly from the allowable claim 1, these dependent claims are also patentable under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and the accompanying remarks, Applicants respectfully solicit entry of this amendment and allowance of the claims.

However, if the Examiner believes that there are still unresolved issues relating to this response, please call Applicants' attorney at 609-734-6834 to expedite the resolution of any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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